



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Barnabas C of E Primary Academy

Parkhouse Street
Openshaw
Manchester, M11 2JX

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Manchester

Local authority: Manchester

Date of inspection: 24th September 2015

Date of last inspection: November 2009

School's unique reference number: 105489

Principal: Lucy Gough

Inspector's name and number: Stephen Burrow 622

School context

St Barnabas is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above the national average, the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well above the national average. A well-above average proportion of pupils joins and leaves the school other than at the normal time.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Barnabas Academy as a Church of England school are good

- The principal leads by example in promoting Christian values to ensure that pupils develop caring relationships. All children are nurtured as individuals in a caring Christian environment.
- The strong faith of the principal and that of a large proportion of staff and governors means that pupils' spiritual development and well-being are a priority.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the effectiveness of this church school. They have a clear vision of how to enable pupils to develop their full potential with the ongoing promotion of Christian values.

Areas to improve

- Establish strategies for pupils to play a part in the planning of worship themes to further enhance their involvement.
- To further improve the evaluation of worship by establishing a time where pupils' individual comments can be shared and reflected on within each class.
- To develop the opportunities for staff to access training to develop themselves as future Christian Leaders.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners

The school's strong Christian ethos enables and encourages the secure partnership that exists between pupils, staff, parents, the church and the wider community. The Chair of Governors said, 'we have created a good foundation with a team of like minded people.' The academy council were so influenced by the words encourage, inspire, believe and achieve, which form the core of the school's ethos that they used them to name four newly created learning areas. Developing pupils' understanding and application of gospel values has prominence through religious education (RE), collective worship, faith symbols and stimulating displays, both in classes and central areas. These key facets of the school's work and ethos engage pupils and promote prayer, reflection and spirituality. The school gives high regard to the development and potential of the whole child, rooted in the belief that each person is special in God's eyes. The school's nurturing ethos and Christian care that exists within and between all members of the school family is exceptional. As a result behaviour is good. Pupils show respect for others and have a well developed understanding of differing faiths and cultures. One pupil said, 'we learn how to be kind to each other, we enjoy supporting each other, to inspire each other.' This is reflected in their excellent attendance, which is above the national average. A significant factor in this is the supportive approach shown towards all families based upon a clear understanding of each pupil's unique needs. The inclusion team work very hard to intervene early and ensure all concerns are dealt with quickly. The Christian values of the school help pupils to persevere, knowing that help is on hand when things become difficult. There is wide recognition within the school family that as a parent put it there is 'something special about this church school'. Most acknowledge that its strong Christian ethos has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils talk about how the school's Christian values impact on their lives and the lives of others. They are proud of their school and enjoy coming to a place where they feel special, safe, well cared for and valued. One member of staff said, 'the children are happy and this rubs off on us, they value us as much as we value them.' Pupils understand the need to help others less fortunate than themselves through their Christian service, supporting charities such as a local mission that distributes harvest gifts to the needy in the local area. One parent said, 'when my son started at the school the staff were so nice with him and it became a second family to him. He felt happy and he has made good friends.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship with strong Christian foundations is central to the daily life of the school driving forward its Christian values. Through the messages given in worship the school promotes its explicit Christian vision providing opportunities for pupils to encounter God. One child said, 'it gives us a chance to think about the message behind the story and try to correct things that are wrong.' Worship is well planned by the principal and worship committee. Themes are developed around the school's core values, the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. Although worship is firmly based on Christian values, world faith festivals such as Eid are celebrated so that pupils gain an understanding of and respect for one another's faiths. One pupil commented, 'Worship is special because it's a time to say sorry, reflect and talk to God'. The pupils' differing needs are met through a variety of worship settings, including opportunities to worship in church. These contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual development. As a result, pupils enjoy and highly value their worship experiences. Pupils benefit from a range of styles of worship involving the vicar, curate and staff. On the inspection day, worship on the theme of 'saying sorry to God and asking for a new start' was enhanced by a stimulating worship table, cross and candle. Pupils entered and left quietly, utilising the opportunity for reflection, which contributes significantly to their spiritual development. All staff join in worship and support pupils in developing their spiritual awareness. Pupils use the Lord's prayer and have the opportunity for prayer at other parts of the day. They also write and use their own prayers in collective worship. Pupils have a very good understanding of bible stories and can explain Jesus'

place at the heart of the Christian faith. One very young child in an RE lesson said, 'God is above us.' Their understanding of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, however, is not developed fully. There are effective procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship but the school recognises the untapped opportunity to record and share pupil's worship reflections within every class as some classes already do with their personal reflections. The school environment is enriched with vibrant displays, colourful banners, verses from the bible and in the school hall a large Fruit of the Spirit Tree, where pupils leave their thoughts and prayers. Together these interactive displays lift the spirit and provide both reflection and discussion opportunities.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

The principal's personal Christian values permeate the life of the school. She has a clear Christian vision for the school and is well supported in this by the senior leadership team and the governing body. The principal provides strong leadership and has evaluated the school's Christian distinctiveness accurately with staff and governors. She ensures that all staff are committed to the developing each pupil in the widest sense. Governors have a strong commitment to the school's Christian foundation. They are effective in their role as 'critical friends' to the leadership team and in supporting teachers. Leadership of the school ensures that the school's Christian values and ethos are at the forefront of all new initiatives. The leadership team also ensure that appropriate support, challenge and encouragement are given to the newly appointed RE coordinator and the worship leader, who both lead with energy, enthusiasm and a desire to seek further improvement. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of what it means to lead a church school and carry out their roles highly effectively. All staff are inducted well into what is expected of them in relation to promoting the Christian ethos of the school. The school rightly acknowledges that there is insufficient emphasis on supporting the professional development for future Christian leaders of church schools. Pupils' views are taken seriously and they have a leading role in the decision making process through the academy council such as the naming of the new learning areas. There are strong links with the local parish church and surrounding area. Staff work very hard and have built strong supportive relationships with parents who appreciate the way in which the school supports them and reaches out into the community. Staff are encouraged to contribute to decisions and their ideas are valued. Parents also feel that their opinions and views are valued and listened to and that any problems are dealt with quickly and sensitively. They agree that the school's Christian ethos is a prominent aspect of school life, allowing their children to explore the meaning of faith and belief openly. One parent said, 'the school celebrates Christian values and at the same time supports all faiths so we feel free to celebrate our beliefs.'

SIAMS report, September 2015, St Barnabas CofE Primary Academy, Openshaw, M11 2JX

